

PRESERVING BRITISH-AMERICAN TOBACCO FILMS IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY CHINA: by Matthew Schofield (Film and Media Collections LIS-694) A Grant Proposal

OVERVIEW

This project was completed for the Film and Media Collections course (LIS-694)

The project entailed writing a grant proposal for a film preservation project with the following requirements:

- Cover Letter
- Summary
- Statement of Purpose
- Budget + Staffing
- Project Overview + Timeline

INTRODUCTION

This proposal is to establish long term preservation of, and access to, a collection of three films produced by the British-American Tobacco Company in China during the 1920s.



We are seeking \$8,354.5 from the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF). The total budget for the project is \$11,102.5.

This project aligns with the aims of the NFPF in elucidating issues of cross cultural communication

TIMELINE OF BRITISH-AMERICAN TOBACCO IN CHINA

1902

The British-American Tobacco Company (BAT) employs aggressive tactics against rivals to place itself as leader in Chinese tobacco industry

Late 1910s

Purchasing theatrical venues and established near monopoly on film exhibition in Shanghai.

1922

Began filming newsreels and travelogues with cigarette adverts inserted in middle.



1925

Released two feature-length films, *One Dollar* and *The Magical Monk*

May 30th, 1925

Anti-imperialist May 30th Movement.
Nationwide protests and boycotts of foreign goods.

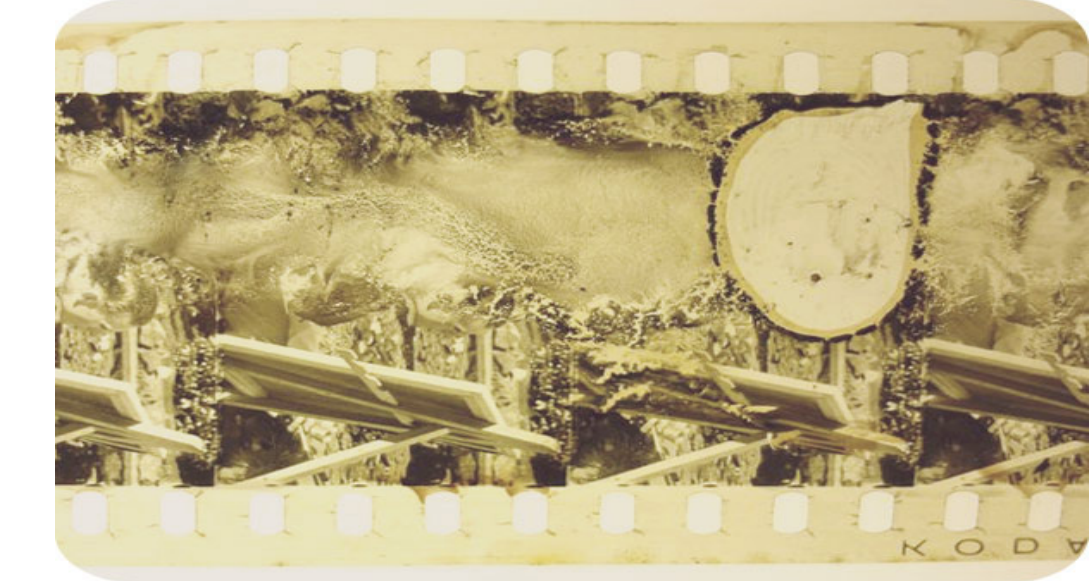
1926

BAT ends film production in China

THE FILMS

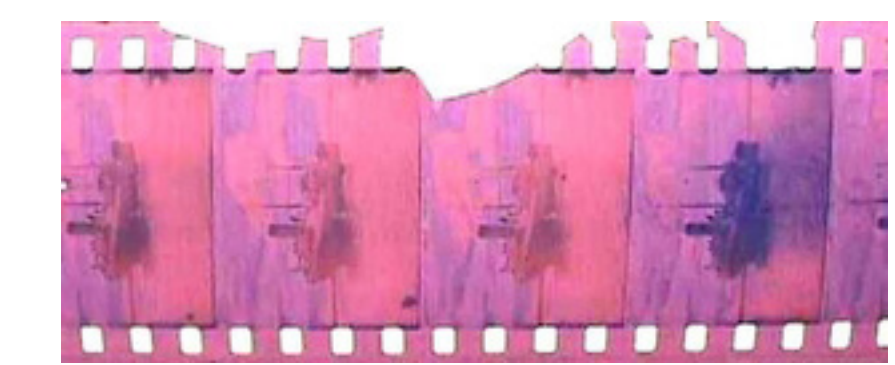
One Dollar (1925)

- Two reels of 35mm cellulose nitrate film stock
- Weak and damaged splices
- Areas of rust indicative of nitrate decay



Scenic A (ca. 1923-1926)

- "Scenic" documentary with cigarette advertisement
- 16mm film print of cellulose diacetate stock
- Some signs of acetate film base degradation ("fair to good" on IPI Guidelines)
- Extensive damage to perforations throughout print



PRESERVATION PLAN

Use a 16mm or 35mm tape splicer to repair weak splices

Wet gate printing to produce dupe negative

From this, a viewing positive print is struck

Scanned to create DVD access copies

Nitrate reels stored in NFPA compliant nitrate cold storage vault

Cold storage units kept at 40F and relative humidity of 40% in line with ISO recommendations

REFERENCES

National Film Preservation Foundation. (2004). The Film Preservation Guide. Accessed via <http://www.filmpreservation.org/preservation-basics/the-film-preservation-guide>
Zhang, Yingjin (Ed). (1999). *Cinema and Urban Culture in Shanghai, 1922-1943*. California: Stanford University Press